

Today, with the same careful attention and dedicated service Lillian Nichols provided a century ago, the nurses of the Visiting Nurse Association of Somerset Hills are helping to heal the sick, the injured, the elderly and the needy of Somerset County.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues in the House of Representatives join with me in congratulating the Visiting Nurse Association of Somerset Hills, and all of the association's outstanding staff, employees and volunteers, upon celebrating its 100th Anniversary.

HONORING CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT MARGARET C. BURGESS FROM THE U.S. AIR FORCE

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 18, 2004*

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of myself, Congresswoman CAPITO and that entire Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues to recognize the 7th Annual Women in the Military Wreath Laying Ceremony hosted by the Caucus at Arlington National Cemetery. The purpose of this event is to honor our Nation's servicewomen and female veterans for their courage and achievements, and to remember women who have died in service to the United States.

Today, we have the opportunity to recognize 5 outstanding female servicewomen, one selected from each branch of the military. These women serve their respective branches with honor, dignity, and courage. These highly decorated leaders chose to defend our freedom and embody the spirit of those that served before them.

From the U.S. Air Force, we will honor Chief Master Sergeant Margaret C. Burgess, who is currently serving as the Superintendent, Intelligence, 920th Rescue Wing, Patrick Air Force Base, Florida. Sergeant Burgess has served the Air Force at a variety of duty stations and capacities. She distinguished herself early in her career by meritorious service during her first assignment as Target Intelligence Specialist at the Royal Air Force Bentwaters, England, where she made outstanding contributions to the wing's combat mission folder program, significantly contributing to the wing's combat readiness. Her thorough understanding of United States Air Forces in Europe and North Atlantic Treaty Organization war plans, and her in-depth knowledge of A-10 combat deployment, made her a key member of the intelligence team during exercises and evaluations.

Sergeant Burgess has repeatedly demonstrated outstanding performance, leadership and devotion to the U.S. Air Force. Of note, Sergeant Burgess engineered the intelligence repatriation process of returned isolated personnel to Ahmed Al Jaber Airbase, Kuwait, and operated successfully during the repatriation of an F-14 aircrew that had ejected over southern Iraq. She demonstrated superb organizational skills by developing comprehensive, all-source ground order battle files of Iraq that were later adopted as the standard by other theater intelligence assets, which resulted in the successful completion of 5 combat rescues, 4 combat recoveries and more than 16

combat support sorties. Among her many achievements, Sergeant Burgess was also awarded the Bronze Star for her work during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Chief Master Sergeant Margaret C. Burgess continues to distinguish herself as an invaluable leader in the Air Force, and it is an honor for each member of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues to recognize the courage and commitment of Sergeant Burgess and all women in the military.

COMMEMORATING 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF BROWN VS. BOARD OF EDUCATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 18, 2004*

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, this is an enormously important day in the lives of African Americans and in the history of this country.

Brown vs. Board of Education, almost without question, is the most important Supreme Court case of the twentieth century. With Brown, the Court threw out decades of doctrine and centuries of racist practice in this country in their conclusion that "Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." By making this just assertion, they forced this nation to begin to live up to its own promises and its own ideals. In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Brown represented a "joyous daybreak to end the long night of enforced segregation."

Brown was a transforming moment in the life of this country. Sadly, it was not immediately transformative, nor is the metamorphosis complete, even today. It took years—even decades in many cities and states—for the mandate of the Court to be carried out. In many places, it was met with fervent political opposition and violent resistance.

In Virginia, for instance, the Governor closed the public school system rather than allow it to be integrated. And in 1957, National Guard troops had to be sent in to guard school children in Little Rock, Arkansas when they tried to begin their studies at Central High School.

In the years after Brown, many, heroic people risked and sometimes lost their lives in the fight to desegregate schools, universities, stores and lunch counters, the workplace. And they risked their well-being in the fight to ensure that they enjoyed that fundamental American right of being able to vote.

But in the end, the forces of racism did not prevail because of the Thurgood Marshalls of the world, the Medger Evers, the Rosa Parks, the Fannie Lou Hamers, the Martin Luther King Jrs, and the Malcolm X's. They ensured that this nation would live up to its own promises, the guarantees that were laid out in Brown.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964, for instance, came about because brave men and women demanded it through bus boycotts and sit-ins and marches on Washington and a thousand other battles.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 came about because people like Fannie Lou Hamer dared to fight to register to vote, dared to form the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, dared to take on the Democratic Party and the establishment, and dared to win.

The Civil Rights Act of 1968, which established the principles of fair access to housing, came about because African Americans demanded the full rights of citizenship and because they knew that housing is a human right. Unfortunately, there are some people in Washington today who still need to recognize that fact.

Thanks to their efforts, Brown became the reality of the nation, not just the law of the land.

Today, on this 50th anniversary, Brown is still the law of the land, but it is no longer a national reality. Legal walls of segregation have been replaced in many areas by de facto separation by neighborhood and community. Our schools are becoming less integrated by the year, and in too many cases, integration has vanished entirely from some schools.

Across the country, efforts have been made—some of which have been successful, unfortunately—to undo the affirmative action programs, whose goal has been to create the fully diverse and integrated justice that the Supreme Court envisioned.

In my home state of California, an African American, Ward Connerly, led the Proposition 209 initiative in 1996, which eliminated affirmative action programs for women and people of color run by state or local governments in the areas of public employment, contracting, and education.

As chair of the California Black Legislature at the time, I fought against it, as did many, many Californians of all races.

In what was a giant setback for Brown and racial equality, Proposition 209 passed, and in one fell swoop, it wiped out a very significant program that was intended to level an extremely uneven playing field. The results have been devastating. African American and Latino enrollments at far too many of our state's universities are in serious decline.

As a recent story in the San Francisco Chronicle indicated, African American admissions at UC—Berkeley, which is in my district, are down 29 percent this year. In this year's freshman class, fewer than two and a half percent of the students accepted were African American. Two and a half percent. And compounding this serious injustice, Governor Schwarzenegger is cutting the budget for the outreach efforts of our universities.

These numbers are an embarrassment. They are an embarrassment for our students, ourselves, and for the promise of Brown. These shameful statistics have profound economic, political, and cultural meaning.

Do these bleak numbers that I have cited mean that Brown v Board of Education failed? No, but it means that our revolution is not over yet. It means that our revolution is still incomplete.

On this 50th anniversary of this enormous Supreme Court victory, we must rededicate ourselves to carry out that opinion whose words rang out clear as a bell when Earl Warren, the former California governor and Oakland resident, read them, "Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."

We can not—we will not—let the victories that were won so hard 50 years ago by Thurgood Marshall, Linda Brown, and so many others be reversed.

Tonight we celebrate that moment, and we rededicate ourselves to ensuring that justice thrives in this country.